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ABSTRACT

A comparative followup study had two major purposes: (1) to determine how successful the mainstreamed special needs graduate is in the world of work in comparison with the regular vocational school graduate and (2) to determine the validity of the mainstreaming program at the Ocean County Vocational-Technical School. Two components of the study were a literature review and a survey and data analysis. The literature showed an increasing concern for education of the handicapped with mainstreaming a common and successful solution. The research design provided for the development of a graduate survey which was sent to thirty-nine mainstreamed and forty regular vocational school graduates. Data collected from both groups were analyzed by using percentages and then compared. Findings indicated that mainstreamed graduates find employment after graduation in the area trained for or a related area equally as well as regular graduates. Employment records of both groups showed no significant difference, but regular graduates utilized post-high school education more than the mainstreamed graduates. The greater difficulty experienced by mainstreamed graduates in securing job leads led to the recommendation for the implementation of a program in teaching job seeking skills in the mainstreaming program at Ocean County. (YLB)

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A COMPARATIVE FOLLOW UP STUDY OF THE MAINSTREAMED GRADUATE AT OCEAN COUNTY VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL

by

Ronald R. Schoka

A PROJECT

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for 0839.600 and 0839.601, Research Seminar in Vocational Special Needs in the Graduate Division of Glassboro State College

1980

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Schoka, Ronald R. A comparative follow-up study of the Mainstreaming Vocational School graduate at Ocean County Vocational Technical School, 1980, Thesis Advisor: G. Ognibene, Industrial Education.

The purpose of this study is an attempt to determine whether the vocational mainstreamed graduate is succeeding in the world of work in comparison to the regular vocational school graduate.

The results of this study indicates that the mainstreamed vocational graduate is doing equally as well, if not better in some cases, as the regular vocational graduate in the world of work.

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Schoka, Ronald R. A comparative follow-up study of the Mainstreamed Vocational School graduate at Ocean County Vocational Technical School 1980, Thesis Advisor: G. Ognibene, Industrial Education.

The major purpose of this study was twofold. One to determine how successfull the mainstreamed special needs graduate is doing in the world of work as compared to the regular vocational school graduate. Two, to determine the validity of the mainstreaming program at Ocean County Vocational Technical School. A graduate survey was developed and sent to thirty-nine (39) mainstreamed vocational school graduates and forty (40) regular vocational school graduates. The data collected from both groups was analyzed by using percentages and then compared against each other.

The following major conclusions were drawn: (a) Mainstreamed graduates are finding employment after graduation; (b) Mainstreamed vocational graduates are finding employment in the area trained or a related area equally as well as the regular vocational graduate; (c) There is no significant difference in the employment records between the mainstreamed vocational graduate and the regular vocational graduate; (d) Regular vocational school graduates utilized post high school education more than the mainstreamed vocational graduate. The fact that mainstreamed vocational school graduates had greater difficulty in securing employment leads this researcher to recommend the implementation of a program in teaching job seeking skills.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This researcher is indebted to those who provided their assistance in the execution of the many phases of this project.

Dr. Gerald Ognibene, the principal advisor to this researcher, is acknowledged for his invaluable suggestions for the undertaking of this study and the presentation of its findings. Clearly, this project could not have been possible without his guidance and counsel.

Mr. Joseph Scelfo, Director of Special Needs, Ocean County Vocational-Technical Schools, instilled in this researcher an awareness of the need for an evaluation of the mainstreaming program in this school district. He provided me not only with the moral support but also made available to me the records of past mainstreamed students. His assistance is greatly appreciated.

This researcher also wishes to acknowledge his wife, Barbara, who not only assisted in editing the original manuscript but who also spent many hours of typing to produce the finished product.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

This researcher is currently employed at the Ocean County Vocational-Technical School. Branches of this system are located in Toms River, Brick Township, Jackson Township and Ocean Township, New Jersey. The Ocean County Vocational School District is a time-shared County Vocational School offering courses in:

Air Conditioning and Refrigeration
Auto Body Repair
Automotive Mechanics
Beauty Culture
Building Trades
Cabinet Making
Climate Control
Dental Assisting
Design Drafting
Electrical Trades
Electromechanical Equipment Repair
Engine Technology
Food Services
Marine Trades
Medical-Dental Receptionist
Medical Skills and Related Health Careers
Printing
Radio and T.V. Repair
Recreational Vehicle Maintenance and Repair
Visual Communications
Welding

Also included in the schools' offerings is a Comprehensive Vocational Special Needs Program. This program offers:

Vocational Assessment

The Evaluation units provide a work oriented evaluative process which assesses a student's ability to do work, determines general areas of vocational interests and aptitudes, and predicts additional training needs, while the student explores the world of work relative to definite occupational areas.

Employment Orientation

The Employment Orientation Program is provided for those students who have completed Vocational Assessment and were recommended by the evaluators for placement into a Employment Orientation Program. This phase is designed to develop a profile of occupational clusters in which students (both boys and girls) with special needs can successfully function. Students are given opportunities to explore many occupational fields through a carefully planned series of activities. The purpose of this phase is to provide data by which future success in a regular vocational program may be projected.

Mainstreaming

It may be determined during a special needs students stay in the Employment Orientation Program that he has reached a level of achievement which demands more training than the Employment Orientation Program, an exploratory experience, can provide. Progress reports compiled by the teachers on this student have indicated strong interests and competencies in a particular vocational area. As a result, recommendations are made to the mainstreamed coordinator for placement in a regular vocational program where in-depth skill training will be provided.

Cooperative Industrial Education

> During a special needs student's involvement in the Employment Orientation Program, it may be discovered that due to certain disabilities such as the inability to comprehend and retain subject matter or lack of aptitude and competencies in a regular vocational area, he may not be recommended for further training in a regular vocational program. In spite of his learning weaknesses, he may display certain entry level skills which could make him eligible for placement in a semi-skilled or unskilled work situation. He may thus be placed in a Cooperative Industrial Education III program which is specifically designed for special needs students.

Post Secondary Program

> The Post Secondary Program is a multi-district county wide project that is an important extension to our existing Special Needs Program. This program enables the Special Needs Program to provide a continuum of service for its special education students who have graduated or who dropped out from the schools of the sending districts.

Through discussions with the Director of Special Needs, Mr. Joseph Scelfo, and this writer's own experiences with mainstreaming the Vocational Special Needs student, it has become apparent that an evaluation of our mainstreaming program would lend itself to research.

The Problem

During the past decade, the United States has become increasingly sensitive to the educational rights and needs

of handicapped and disadvantaged persons. On November 29, 1975, President Gerald Ford signed into law the Education for all Handicapped Children Act. This Act was intended as an instrument in providing a free and appropriate education for all handicapped children. A portion of this law requires that all handicapped children be placed in the least restrictive environment. As a result, the concept of mainstreaming came into being. There has been much talk about the logic of mainstreaming. Many educators have resisted the theory of mainstreaming for varying reasons. Other educators have argued that the special education student has not been given an equal opportunity to succeed in the educational process.

The Ocean County Vocational-Technical School has bridged the problems still encountered by many school districts in mainstreaming its Vocational Special Needs students. For a number of years I have been mainstreaming the Vocational Special Needs student into regular programs. It has been felt that this program has been successful. However, little data is available supporting this belief. If we are to continue mainstreaming special needs students successfully, we must have accurate data supporting our claims to a successful program. If our program is not as successful as we believe, than we must modify our program to make it successful.

Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this study is twofold. One, to determine the validity of the mainstreaming program at the Ocean County Vocational-Technical School. Two, to determine how successful the mainstreamed special needs graduates are versus the regular vocational school graduates in the real world of work.

Specifically, the study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. Is the mainstreamed special needs graduate finding employment after graduation?
2. Is the mainstreamed special needs graduate finding employment in the area trained for or any employment as easily as the regular vocational program graduate?
3. Which group is having the greatest unemployment record, the mainstreamed special needs graduate or the regular vocational school graduate?
4. Which group is currently having the greatest earning power?
5. What sources are used by both mainstreamed special needs graduates and regular vocational school graduates in finding employment?
6. Has the mainstreamed special needs graduate utilized any other educational programs? If so, is he using them more than the regular vocational graduate?

Hypotheses

The research hypotheses for this study were:

1. The mainstreaming program at the Ocean County Vocational-Technical School is successful in that it adequately prepares its special needs students for regular vocational programs.

2. The mainstreamed special needs graduate is succeeding equally as well as the regular vocational graduate in the world of work.

Assumptions

The following assumption is considered in relation to the problem:

1. Data obtained directly from both mainstreamed special needs graduates and regular vocational graduates concerning their employment record constitutes one of the best available sources of this information.

Delimitations

The research was limited to Ocean County. It is hoped, however, that certain generalizations can be made that would benefit others who train vocational-special needs students.

Conclusions

As a result of this study, the Ocean County Vocational-Technical School may (1) continue to mainstream its vocational-special needs students in its present format; (2) modify its mainstreaming program to meet the realistic needs of the mainstreamed special needs student.

It is anticipated that the data collected from this study would aide the Ocean County Vocational-Technical School, if necessary in modifying its mainstreaming

program, to include additional services, such as (a) methods of finding employment; (b) developing proper job attitudes; and (c) assistance in locating suitable employment.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

History

The rights of handicapped students to an appropriate education has not always existed as it does today. For ages, people with any form of handicap had no rights whatsoever. "Early civilizations viewed handicapped individuals as undesirable and dangerous persons. They were often thought to have been accursed of the Gods and were ostracized by society" (Kumble, 1978). However, as time progressed into the Medieval Ages, attitudes toward the handicapped changed from one of ostracizing to one of toleration. Begging by the blind, deaf, crippled and those of "weak" minds was permitted because the rath of God supposedly would strike those who refused to tolerate the existance of the handicapped person (Melcher, 1976).

Education of the handicapped went largely unnoticed in this country during its early developmental stages although laws affecting free Public Education were passed as early as 1827. However, handicapped individuals were generally excluded. It was not until 1911 in New Jersey

when state statutes were passed for permissive or mandatory education of handicapped children. Subsequently, other states followed suit and accepted their responsibility (Melcher, 1976).

It was speculated by Melcher that the period following World War II provided the atmosphere for a major thrust in serving the handicapped. He suggests the following factors having had a positive affect on education of the handicapped (Melcher, 1976).

1. Expanded professional knowledge
2. The awareness of the need to repair war-wounded
3. Leadership of prominent individuals
4. Amalgamation of professional groups
5. Political expedience
6. The 1962 report "A Proposed Program for National Action to Combat Mental Retardation"
7. The recent role of the federal government

Since World War II a large number of Federal Laws have greatly affected the education of the handicapped. Those of major importance include the Vocational Educational Amendments of 1975, Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Educational Amendments of 1975. The Vocational Education Amendments of 1976 provided specific set aside monies for the vocational educations of handicapped youth. While the educational amendments

of 1975, which included P.L. 94-142, is perhaps the most noteworthy federal legislation since the Civil Rights Amendments of 1964. The effects of P.L. 94-142, "The Education of all Handicapped Children Act" will be significant for years to come (Roberts, 1975).

P.L. 94-142

The Education of all Handicapped Children Act has significantly expanded the scope and purpose of educating all handicapped children. The intent of this law is to (Irvin, 1976):

1. Assure that all handicapped children have available to them a free and appropriate public education.
2. Assure that the rights of handicapped children and their parents are protected.
3. Help states and localities provide for the education of all handicapped children.
4. Assess and assure the effectiveness of the efforts to educate handicapped children.

Among other topics, this law further indicates that each handicapped child be placed in the least restrictive environment. However, this does not necessarily indicate that each and every handicapped student be placed in a regular class. In fact, a regular class placement, in some incidents, may be more restrictive than his current special education class. Therefore, it is important to realize that as valuable as placing students in the least restrictive setting is, it must also be done cautiously.

Mainstreaming

Mainstreaming is based on the conviction that each individual should be educated in the least restrictive environment. This lease restrictive environment is one in which the students' educational and related needs can be satisfactorily provided (Feicher, O'Brien, 1976). Therefore, mainstreaming can be considered as both an important and potentially dangerous educational innovation. It is important because it suggests full participation by handicapped students in the educational system. It is dangerous because, without and understanding of the changes or the complexity of changes the innovation requires, it could nullify the recent advances made for handicapped children (Paul, Turnbull, Cruickshank, 1977).

The following explanations adopted from the Council for Exceptional Children (1975) serves to clarify the concept of mainstreaming (Council for Exceptional Children, 1975):

Mainstreaming is:

> Providing the most appropriate education for each student in the least restrictive setting
>
> Looking at the educational needs of students instead of clinical or diagnostic labels such as mentally handicapped, learning disabled, physically handicapped, or hearing impaired
>
> Looking for and creating alternatives that will help academic vocational educators serve students with learning or adjustment problems in the regular setting

Uniting the skills of academic, vocational and special education so that all students may have equal educational opportunity.

Mainstreaming is not:

Wholesale return of all exceptional students in special classes or programs at regular classes

Permitting students with special needs to remain in regular classrooms without the support services that they need

Ignoring the need of some students for a more specialized program than can be provided in the regular vocational education program

Less costly than serving students in special self-contained classrooms or programs.

Perhaps the most important of all, mainstreaming cannot be allowed to happen haphazardly. It requires careful planning, administration and organization of critical elements within the school system. In mainstreaming handicapped students into regular vocational programs there must be one key individual who can effectively handle the coordination and administration of the school's mainstreaming policy (Schwartz, 1978).

Vocational Mainstreaming Coordinator

Because mainstreaming is such a complex process, it is necessary to provide a key person to coordinate people and services involved in educating the special needs student. Hughes (1978), in his study, identified the overriding need for program coordination between special educators and vocational educators at the local level.

A vocational mainstreaming coordinator for special needs students would be a team leader, a liaison between special educators, vocational educators, school administrators, community agencies and parents. He is also an advocate for the special needs student. To function in his role, a vocational mainstreaming coordinator should possess the following qualifications (Feicher, O'Brien, 1976):

1. Knowledge of the characteristics and capabilities of students with all categories of Special Needs.
2. Diagnostic skills for selecting and placing special needs students in the regular vocational classroom.
3. Ability to develop prescriptive courses of study for special needs students.
4. Skill in helping vocational teachers individualize their course of study.
5. Knowledge of resource agencies and materials for special needs students.
6. Skill in writing proposals to obtain funding for projects involving special needs students.

Risk-Taking

The impact of federal legislation for educating the handicapped has brought new terms into the educational field. One such new term is referred to as "risk-taking". This principle of risk-taking stresses that there is a basic human dignity that develops from taking risks. These risks are denied to the handicapped when they are overprotected, especially when they are placed in special

education classrooms. Handicapped students should be allowed to explore, learn and face the same experiences as normal students. Therefore, risk-taking should be incorporated in every handicapped student's curriculum (Schwartz, 1978).

An attitude of risk-taking is necessary for the education of handicapped students in the regular vocational classroom. The provisions necessary for normal risk-taking can be accomplished with only a minimal amount of modifications in the teaching approach and regular classroom environment. However, it cannot be overemphasized that over-compensation for the needs of handicapped students can and will restrict their potential rather than increasing their ability (Hughes, Rice, 1978).

Barriers to Mainstreaming

In implementing any new program, it is likely that we will encounter barriers. It is no different when we consider the mainstreaming of special needs students into a regular vocational program. In fact, it is likely that we would encounter greater barriers when we consider the nature and scope of mainstreaming special needs students. An evaluation report by Rice (1974) listed four major obstacles in implementing a mainstream program (Rice, 1974). They are:

1. Regular teacher attitudes to the handicapped

2. Attitudes and willingness of general administrators
3. Lack of fiscal resources
4. Insufficient specialist staff

In December 1974, a Special Study Institute on Mainstreaming was conducted for teachers and administrators of special education (Jones, 1974). As a result of that conference, a list of barriers to mainstreaming was developed. The following is a list of those barriers:

1. Special Education Teacher's prescriptions that students will have reduced services as a result of mainstreaming
2. Regular students objecting to special education students
3. Regular and special education teacher attitudes
4. Developing adequate prescriptions, materials, and teaching techniques
5. Competent teachers both in regular and special education
6. Selling mainstreaming to the staff
7. Modification of school facilities
8. Coordination of all programs which interfere with regular and special education
9. The division of the total resources between special and regular instruction
10. Inadequate preparation of regular class teachers
11. The attitude of regular administrators and their reluctance to assume a greater part of mainstreaming in special education.

These two studies support the fact that barriers to mainstreaming exist. However, through careful planning

and coordination these barriers can be eliminated.

Current Mainstreaming Models

There are several models for mainstreaming the handicapped student. Current thinking seems to support the feeling that the special needs students can best be served in a regular vocational program if the student continues to receive special education support services while in a regular vocational program. Cooperation between the special education and vocational education educators in planning and delivering of services is mandatory. without this cooperation in planning and delivery of services, the success of the mainstreamed student might well be in jeopardy (Rumble, 1978).

The literature shows that most public school special needs students are accommodated in one or a combination of four program models (Bergman, 1975). These four program models are:

1. Regular placement with support
2. Regular placement with no special support
3. Vocational instruction in special education classes
4. Modified vocational curriculum

Regular Placement with Support

A variety of special support services is necessary

in order to provide vocational instruction for handicapped students. One study of deaf students indicated that teachers and the students both had low expectation levels of the students' chances for success. Teachers were concerned about safety; and were doubtful about the employability of the deaf students (Hehir, 1973). These concerns are similar to the concerns vocational educators have about the handicapped student population in general.

Through special instruction using student aides, teaching aides or modified equipment, many handicapped students did achieve in vocational programs at the same success rate as non-handicapped students. It may sometimes be necessary to assign an aide to work on an individual basis with a student, but more than likely the teacher can work with a small group of handicapped students in a regular vocational program. However, the assignment of a specific resource person to handle the coordination of mainstreaming is important in order to maximize the number of student contacts. Also, in such matters as student discipline, transporation arrangements, class scheduling, counseling, guidance, and liaison work with the staff, a mainstreaming coordinator's role can be invaluable to the regular vocational educator.

Regular Placement with No Special Support

Historically, most of the vocational education of the handicapped has been accomplished in this environment. Mainstreaming has normally been limited to teachers who are reasonably accepting and flexible in their instruction, and a handicapped population that is comparatively non-threatening. The "well-behaved" mildly retarded, and bright students with other handicaps have traditionally been more easily integrated into regular vocational classes whereas the more severely retarded student and those with learning disorders and emotional problems have commonly been excluded (Rumble, 1978).

This kind of class situation can provide for successful learning experiences for some special needs students, but it leaves too much to chance. It does not consider how much more the student might learn, if his learning needs were diagnosed and taught accordingly. Nor does it consider the unmet vocational needs of the more severely handicapped excluded from regular vocational programs.

Vocational Instruction in Special Education Classes

The logic for this model is that special education teachers are generally best prepared to each special needs students. However, they may not have the necessary knowledge to teach vocational education effectively. Therefore,

the special educator may not be able to provide a concrete and meaningful instruction at a particular skill level. Also, special education teachers tend to view the vocational preparation needs of their student more from a viewpoint of solving their everyday problems. Little regard is given to extensive career exploration and much less is being done to provide special vocational instruction.

Modified Vocational Curriculum

The final program model for mainstreaming the handicapped is to modify the vocational curriculum for handicapped students. This method is similar to the regular placement with support model. However, it is different in one key aspect. This model takes into account the learning limitations of the handicapped student. This model suggests that by varying course content or methods the handicapped student can best be served. The problem with this model is that teachers who are concerned about course standards and the employability of the handicapped will have problems in accepting this model. However, if some type of agreement could be worked out between special educators and vocational educators for additional support services, then the learning potential for the handicapped might be realized.

If this model is to be successful, it is only logical then, that special educators must provide additional services, such as pre-placement counseling and guidance and vocational placement assistance.

Aspects of a Successful Mainstreaming Program

A review of the literature has shown that mainstreaming the special needs student can be done successfully. The literature has also shown that there are characteristics in common to all successful mainstreaming programs (Feicher, O'Brien, 1976). The most common characteristic is a combination of:

1. Greater teacher cooperation
2. Instructional Aides and Tutoring
3. Inservice programs
4. Individualized Instruction
5. Modified Curriculum
6. Flexible and competency base grading
7. Careful coordination of Special Needs students
8. Coordination of educational leadership
9. Modified equipment and/or facilities (when necessary)

CHAPTER III

DESIGN AND PROCEDURE

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is an attempt to determine how successful the mainstreamed special needs graduate is doing in the real world of work as compared to a non mainstreamed regular vocational school graduate. This comparative analysis will also test the validity of the mainstreaming program at the Ocean County Vocational-Technical School.

POPULATION

Mainstreamed Vocational Special Needs Graduate

The population to be evaluated is that of the mainstreamed vocational special needs graduate. This group of students is classified according to New Jersey statutes. Additionally, each student had spent a minimum of one year in the special needs employment orientation program at the Ocean County Vocational-Technical School prior to being mainstreamed into a regular vocational program.

Regular Vocational Program Graduate

This population of graduates had entered the Ocean County Vocational-Technical School utilizing the standard enrollment procedure for entrance into a regular vocational program and are not classified students. The number of graduates for this group was selected at random and is equal to the number of mainstreamed graduates. Also, the students selected from this group were in the same vocational class as the mainstreamed student.

SURVEY DESIGN

Basically, the data for this research was derived from a questionnaire survey. Factors considered in devising this questionnaire are:

1. Periods of employment.
2. Ease or difficulty in securing and/or holding a job for which he/she was trained for.
3. Information concerning whether the students, both mainstreamed and regular vocational graduate, is working in an occupation for which he/she was trained.
4. Number of interviews prior to employment.
5. Sources of information about job opening.
6. Information concerning whether employment is temporary or permanent.
7. Information concerning the students current economic status.
8. Information concerning whether any post-secondary education was utilized to improve skills or to obtain new ones.

Coding the Questionnaire

The same questionnaire was mailed to both mainstreamed and regular vocational school graduates. In order to keep anonymity of each student, no names were required to be placed on the questionnaire. However, in order to keep an accurate record of who had or had not returned the survey each questionnaire was coded. The coding was placed on the back of each questionnaire. It contained a number relating to each student's name, a letter indicating whether the student was a regular or mainstreamed student and finally another letter indicating the student's program.

Mailing the Questionnaire

The same questionnaire was mailed to both mainstreamed and regular vocational school graduates. It was anticipated that the questionnaire would be returned to me within a time period of one month. However, if the questionnaire was not returned to me within the anticipated time frame a second questionnaire was mailed. Again, it was requested that they complete the questionnaire and return it to me as soon as possible.

CHAPTER IV

METHODS AND FINDINGS

Based on available school records, the total population of mainstreamed students who have graduated from the Ocean County Vocational-Technical School in the past four years is thirty-eight (38) students. Every mainstreamed graduate was sent a letter of transmittal explaining the project and a questionnaire (See Appendix B) concerning their employment status and their experience in seeking employment. Non-respondents were sent a reminder letter in order to obtain a larger percentage of respondents (See Appendix C for reminder letter). Nineteen (51%) of these mainstreamed graduates responded. The same letter and questionnaire was sent to thirty-seven (37) regular vocational school graduates. These students were randomly selected from those programs in which the mainstreamed student had graduated. Once again the non-respondents were sent a reminder letter in order to obtain a larger percentage. Nineteen (52%) of that population responded.

TABLE I

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Respondent	Employed	Unemployed
Mainstreamed Graduate	17	2
Regular Graduate	15	4

These responses indicate that eighty-nine percent (89%) of the mainstreamed graduates were employed and seventy-nine percent (79%) of the regular vocational school graduates were employed at the time this survey was taken.

TABLE II

AREAS OF EMPLOYMENT

Respondent	Employed in Area Trained	Related	Unrelated
Mainstreamed Graduate	9	5	4
Regular Graduate	8	4	5

These responses indicate that forty-five percent (45%) of the mainstreamed graduates were working directly in the area for which they were trained. The responses

further indicate that a total of seventy-four percent (74%) of the mainstreamed graduates were employed either directly or indirectly in the area for which they were trained. While a total of sixty-three percent (63%) of the regular vocational school graduates responded that they were employed directly or indirectly in the area for which they trained.

TABLE III

PERIODS OF UNEMPLOYMENT

Respondent	Never Unemployed	Unemployed At Least Once
Mainstreamed Graduate	5	14
Regular Graduate	6	12

According to the responses seventy-three percent (73%) of the mainstreamed special needs graduates and sixty-three percent (63%) of the regular vocational graduates were unemployed at some time after graduation.

TABLE IV

LONGEST PERIOD OF TIME
GRADUATE WAS UNEMPLOYED

Time Weeks	Respondents	
	Mainstreamed Graduate	Regular Graduate
Less than one week	5	11
2	1	3
4	1	
6		
8	1	
10		
12	2	1
14		
16		
18		
20		1
24	2	
28	1	2
One Year	2	
Total	15	18

It is indicated by the responses that the majority of mainstreamed graduates who experienced unemployment did so for more than six weeks. While the majority of regular vocational school graduates who experienced unemployment did so for one week or less.

TABLE V

NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS
PRIOR TO EMPLOYMENT

Number of Interviews	Respondents	
	Mainstreamed Graduate	Regular Graduate
0		
1	9	10
2	2	2
3		
4	1	1
5		
6	3	
7		
8		1
9	1	1
Total	16	15

According to the responses thirty-two percent (32%) of the mainstreamed graduates had more than two interviews before securing employment. Twenty percent (20%) of the regular graduates had more than two interviews prior to securing employment.

TABLE VI

TIME IT TOOK TO SECURE A JOB

Time (Months)	Respondents	
	Mainstreamed Graduate	Regular Graduate
Placed before Graduation	9	11
1-3	4	4
4-5	1	1
6-9	2	
Over 10 months		1

Not including the non-respondents, fifty-six percent (56%) of the mainstreamed graduates and fifty-nine percent (59%) of the regular vocational graduates were placed prior to graduation. While it took twenty-five percent (25%) of the mainstreamed graduates one to three months after graduation to find employment and it took twenty-four percent (24%) of the regular vocational school graduates one to three months to find employment after graduation. Therefore, eighty percent (80%) of the mainstreamed graduates were employed within three months after graduation and eighty-eight percent (88%) of the regular vocational graduates were employed within three months after graduation.

TABLE VII

DIFFICULTY IN FINDING EMPLOYMENT

Degree of Difficulty	Respondents	
	Mainstreamed Graduate	Regular Graduate
Very difficult	6	2
Moderately difficult	3	4
Simple	2	6
Very Simple	5	6
Total	16	18

Excluding the non-respondents, fifty-six percent (56%) of the mainstreamed graduates expressed some degree of difficulty in finding employment, while only thirty-three percent (33%) of the regular vocational school graduates expressed some difficulty in finding employment.

TABLE VIII

TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT

Respondent	Temporary	Permanent
Mainstreamed Graduate	2	15
Regular Graduate	2	13

Through an analysis of each respondent's questionnaire it was learned that fourteen mainstreamed graduates working in the field for which they were trained or in a related area, nine (65%) hold a permanent position. The respondents who indicated that their employment was temporary in both mainstreamed and regular graduate categories did so because they had enlisted in the military and were undecided whether or not to make the military their career.

TABLE IX

GRADUATE SALARIES

Salaries (Weekly)	Respondents	
	Mainstreamed Graduate	Regular Graduate
Below $100	1	3
$100-125	2	
125-150	6	3
150-175	3	1
175-200	1	1
200-225	1	2
Over $225	1	4
Total	15	14

According to the responses the average weekly salary range for the mainstreamed graduate was between $125.00 to $150.00 weekly, while the average weekly salary range

for the regular vocational graduate was between $150.00 to $175.00 weekly.

Through analysis of the questionnaire it was determined that the average weekly salary range of a mainstreamed graduate working in the area trained or related was $150.00 to $175.00 weekly. The average weekly salary range of the regular graduate working in the area trained or related areas was $150.00 to $175.00 weekly.

In order to ascertain the extent to which Ocean County Vocational-Technical School played a role in securing employment for its students, item 6 was included in the questionnaire.

TABLE X

THE SOURCE OF INFORMATION WHICH LED TO EMPLOYMENT

Source	Respondents	
	Mainstreamed Graduate	Regular Graduate
Newspaper	3	2
Friends/Relatives	8	8
Employment Agency		1
Personal Contact	4	3
School Counsellor	1	1
Job Service		1
Total	16	16

Fifty percent (50%) of both mainstreamed and regular graduates utilized friends or relatives to secure employment, while fifty-three percent (53%) of the mainstreamed graduates and thirty-two percent (32%) of regular graduates used either newspapers or personal contact to secure a job. Through an analysis of the questionnaire it can be noted that one mainstreamed graduate and two regular graduates utilized more than one source to secure a job.

TABLE XI
ADDITIONAL EDUCATION TO IMPROVE SKILLS

Respondent	Yes	No
Mainstreamed Graduate	3	12
Regular Graduate	8	9

Not including the non-respondents, eighty percent (80%) of the mainstreamed graduates did not pursue any form of education once they graduated Ocean County Vocational-Technical School. Of those regular vocational graduates who answered yes to this item the majority continued their education at a two year college or private technical school.

Although not requested, a few of the respondents, both mainstreamed and regular graduates, made comments on the questionnaire. The majority of comments made were positive with respect to the skill training they received at Ocean County Vocational-Technical School. One student wrote "...the job I have now, I obtained through the Vocational School for that I am grateful." Another student wrote that "Jobs in this area (referring to Ocean County) were few and I became very discouraged, but the training I received at the Vocational School greatly affected my career in the military."

On the other hand, there were a couple of negative comments. One complained of age discrimination. Another student complained that he was not able to learn the trade he wanted at the Vocational School. Therefore, after graduation he apprenticed himself in the trade area he wanted.

Of all the questionnaires returned by mainstreamed students, not one commented that he or she had not been placed in a program appropriate to their needs, interest and ability. Only one mainstreamed graduate complained about his inability to locate employment. Therefore, as a result of these comments, it can be concluded that the mainstreamed graduate was satisfied with the training he received at Ocean County Vocational-Technical School.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary of the problem and method of investigation

This study was designed to determine the validity of the mainstreaming program at Ocean County Vocational-Technical School and to also find out how successful the mainstreamed special needs graduate is doing in the real world of work, by comparing him to the regular vocational graduate. The procedure used in this investigation to secure data was primarily to send questionnaires to all mainstreamed graduates on record and randomly selected regular vocational graduates.

Summary of the findings

1. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of the mainstreamed graduates were employed while seventy-nine percent (79%) of the regular vocational graduates were employed.
2. Forty-seven percent (47%) of the mainstreamed graduates were employed directly in the area trained while forty-two percent (42%) of the regular vocational graduates were employed directly in the area trained.

3. Seventy-four percent (74%) of the mainstreamed graduates were employed either directly in or a related area for which they trained. Sixty-three percent (63%) of the regular vocational graduates were working either directly in or a related area for which they trained.
4. Seventy-three percent (73%) of the mainstreamed graduates were unemployed at some time after graduation. Sixty-three percent (63%) of the regular vocational graduates were unemployed at some time after graduation.
5. The majority of mainstreamed graduates who experienced unemployment did so for more than six weeks. The majority of regular vocational graduates who experienced unemployment did so for less than one week.
6. Thirty-two percent (32%) of the mainstreamed graduates had more than two interviews before securing employment. Twenty percent (20%) of the regular graduates had more than two interviews prior to securing employment.
7. Fifty-six percent (56%) of the mainstreamed graduates were placed in employment prior to graduation. Fifty-nine percent (59%) of the regular vocational graduates were placed in employment prior to graduation.

8. It took twenty-five percent (25%) of the mainstreamed graduates one to three months to secure employment, while it took twenty-four percent (24%) of the regular vocational graduates one to three months to secure employment.
9. Fifty-six percent (56%) of the mainstreamed graduates expressed difficulty in seeking employment. Thirty-three percent (33%) of the regular vocational graduates expressed difficulty in seeking employment.
10. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of the mainstreamed graduates and eighty-six percent (86%) of the regular vocational graduates are employed in permanent positions.
11. Sixty-five percent (65%) of the mainstreamed graduates employed in the area trained or a related area are employed on a permanent basis. Seventy-five percent (75%) of the regular vocational graduates employed in the area trained or a related area are employed on a permanent basis.
12. The average weekly salary range for the mainstreamed graduate was between $125.00 to $150.00 weekly. The average weekly salary range for the regular vocational graduate was between $150.00 to $175.00 weekly.

13. Fifty percent (50%) of both mainstreamed and regular vocational graduates utilized friends or relatives to secure employment.
14. Eighty percent (80%) of the mainstreamed graduates did not pursue any form of education after graduation.
15. Of those mainstreamed graduates who did follow through with additional education after graduation, all of them had been sent to school by their employer, while those regular vocational graduates who continued his education after graduation did so at a two year college or private technical school.

Conclusion

This researcher has arrived at conclusions which were discussed in terms of specific questions, as stated in the introduction.

The mainstreamed special needs graduate has been able to secure employment after graduation. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of the mainstreamed graduates are employed. In comparing the employment record of the mainstreamed special needs graduates with that of the regular vocational program graduates, we find that only seventy-nine percent (79%) of the regular vocational program graduates are employed. This indicates that the

mainstreamed special needs graduate has learned job survival skills at least equally as well as the regular vocational program graduate.

The mainstreamed special needs student who has graduated from school has been able to secure employment in the area trained or a related area, equally as well as the regular vocational program graduate. Indications from the statistics show that seventy-four percent (74%) of the mainstreamed special needs graduates were working either directly in the area for which they trained or one that was related, while only sixty-three percent (63%) of the regular vocational program graduates were working either directly in the area for which they trained or one that was related.

With respect to the ease of securing employment the mainstreamed special needs graduate expressed difficulty in securing employment considerably more than the regular vocational program graduate. It took the majority of mainstreamed special need graduates more than six weeks to secure employment, while the majority of regular vocational program graduates secured employment in less than one week. Also, thirty-two percent (32%) of the mainstreamed special needs students required more than two interviews before securing employment while only twenty-five percent (25%) of the regular vocational program

required more than two interviews to secure employment. Therefore, the mainstreamed special needs graduate was not able to find employment as easily as the regular vocational program graduate. Indications here suggest that the mainstreamed special needs graduate might be lacking basic job seeking skills.

The mainstreamed special needs graduate and the regular vocational program graduate have essentially the same unemployment record. Of both groups surveyed it was found that seventy-three percent (73%) of the mainstreamed special needs graduates and sixty-three percent (63%) of the regular vocational program graduates, who responded, had experienced unemployment at some time after graduation. The average mainstreamed special needs graduate and the average regular vocational program graduate, who responded, and who experienced unemployment did so one time. One area of deviation was that the majority of mainstreamed special needs graduates were unemployed for six weeks, while the majority of regular vocational program graduates were unemployed one week or less, once again showing the need for job seeking skills.

It has been found that the salaries of the mainstreamed special needs graduates are somewhat below the level of the regular vocational program graduate. The average weekly salary range for the mainstreamed special needs graduate is

$125.00 to $150.00 weekly, while the average weekly salary range for the regular vocational program graduate is $150.00 to $175.00 weekly. As a result of this salary differential it can be assumed that the mainstreamed special needs graduate in all probability is working at a somewhat lower skill level than the regular vocational program graduate.

In their effort to seek employment, both mainstreamed special needs graduates and regular vocational program graduates appeared to have equal difficulty in utilizing standard methods of finding employment. Fifty percent (50%) of both mainstreamed special needs graduates and regular vocational program graduates utilized friends or relatives to secure employment. Of the fifty percent (50%) of both groups who utilized sources other than friends or relatives fifty-three percent (53%) of the mainstreamed special needs graduates and thirty-two percent (32%) of the regular vocational program graduates utilized the newspaper or personal employer contact to secure employment. The inference here is that both groups appear to be lacking in job seeking skills. Skills that should be learned in the vocational classroom.

A general need exists to make the mainstreamed special needs student aware of the benefits of continuing his education after graduation. From the responses it was

found that eighty percent (80%) of the mainstreamed special needs graduate did not pursue any form of education after graduation. Of those mainstreamed special needs graduates who received additional education all had been sent to school by their employer.

This is in direct contrast to the regular vocational program graduate. Over fifty percent (50%) of the regular vocational program graduate continued his education after graduation. The majority of these students who continued their education did so at a two year college or private technical school. Therefore, the majority of regular vocational program graduates are aware of and utilize this awareness by continuing his education to improve or develop new skills.

All pertinent data to this problem leads this researcher to recommend that the mainstreaming program developed by Ocean County Vocational-Technical School continue to function as it has in the past with some minor modifications based on the following findings:

1. Ample data proves that the mainstreamed vocational special needs graduates are securing employment after graduation.
2. Ample data also proves that the mainstreamed vocational special needs graduate is finding employment in the area trained or in related

areas equally as well as the regular vocational program graduate.

3. Data shows that there is no significant differences in the unemployment record between the mainstreamed vocational special needs graduate and the regular program graduate.
4. A difference does exist between the average salaries received by the mainstreamed vocational special needs graduate and the regular vocational program graduate, however, the difference is not significant.
5. Not one mainstreamed vocational special needs graduate indicated that he had been placed in a program that was not appropriate to his interests, needs and ability.

Recommendations to modify the mainstreaming program.

1. Mainstreamed vocational special needs graduates are having more difficulty in securing employment than the regular vocational program graduate. Therefore, a job seeking skills program should be developed. This program should not be limited to the mainstreamed vocational special needs student, but should include all vocational special needs students.

2. mainstreamed vocational special needs graduates have not utilized post high school programs as well as the regular vocational program graduates. The mainstreamed vocational special needs graduate, through additional programs, should be made aware of the benefits, both personal and professional that can be achieved by continuing his education.

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APPENDIX A

October 22, 1979

Dear Graduate,

I am conducting a follow-up study of Ocean County Vocational-Technical School graduates. The purpose of this study is to determine what successes or problems, if any, our graduates are having in finding employment, especially in the area for which you were trained.

Your responses are valuable to me, because without them I cannot make any determinations to the problems you might have encountered in finding employment.

It is important that I receive this questionnaire from you by November 6, 1979. Please us the enclosed stamped envelope.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

RONALD SCHOKA
Coordinator
Cooperative Education

APPENDIX B

GRADUATE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Are you presently working?

   Yes_____ No_____ Why Not?_____

   a. Are you working in the area for which you were trained?

      Yes_____ No_____

   b. If not, are you working in an area related to your training?

      Yes_____ No_____

   c. Is your present employment Temporary or Permanent?

      Temporary_____ Permanent_____

2. Did you have any periods of unemployment after graduation?

   Yes_____ No_____

   a. If so, state the number of times you were unemployed_____

   b. State the longest period of time you were unemployed_____

3. State the number of interviews you had prior to employment_____

4. Check the period of time it took you to get a job after graduation:

Placed before graduation_____; 1-3 months_____;

4-5 months_____; 6-9 months_____; over

10 months_____.

5. Rate the difficulty you had in finding employment after graduation:

Very difficult_____; Moderately difficult_____;

Simple_____; Very simple_____.

6. Check the source of information which led to your employment:

Newspaper_____; Friends or relative_____;

Employment agency_____; Contacted employer

personally_____; School counselor_____;

Other_____.

If you checked "Other", please explain.

7. What is your current weekly salary range:

Below $100 weekly_____; Between $100 - $125_____;

Between $125 - $150_____; Between $150 - $175_____;

Between $175 - $200_____; Between $200 - $225_____;

Over $225_____.

8. Since graduation have you had any additional education to improve your skills?

Yes_____ No_____

a. If so, where did you take these courses:

Ocean County Vocational-Technical School_____

2 year college_____

4 year college_____

Private Technical School_____

Other_____

if you checked "Other", please explain:

APPENDIX C

November 22, 1979

To Whom It May Concern:

Approximately one month ago we sent you a questionnaire and a letter explaining the follow-up study we are conducting. If you recall, this project was a study to determine what successes or problems our graduates are having in finding employment, especially in the area for which you were trained.

The project cannot progress to completion until we obtain the data based on the survey. Therefore, we appeal to you to help us in our efforts by completing the enclosed questionnaire. Please return it to us by December 1, 1979.

We again thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to aid us in this important area of education.

Sincerely,

RONALD SCHOKA
Coordinator
Cooperative Education

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Name: Ronald R. Schoka

Date and place of birth: August 26, 1943
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Elementary School: St. Joseph Catholic School
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